DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 454 908 JC 010 496

TITLE	New Associate Degree Requirements. The Advisor.
INSTITUTION	British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer, Vancouver.
PUB DATE	2000-06-00
NOTE	6p.
AVAILABLE FROM	For full text: http://www.bccat.bc.ca.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Associate Degrees; College Role; *Community Colleges; *Degree Requirements; *Degrees (Academic); Two Year Colleges
IDENTIFIERS	*Canada

ABSTRACT

This document contains a brief history of the development of the associate degree in British Columbia and reviews the degrees presently conferred. A major portion of the document focuses on newly approved (May 30, 2000) requirements for the Associate Degree of Arts (AA) and the Associate Degree of Science (AS). The associate degree formally became a degree in 1991; between 1993 and 1998, 1,350 students earned one. The report examines associate degree standards, simplicity, and transfer, and recommends: clarifying the intent of the degree; changing overall grade point average requirements; and allowing statistics courses to count towards the Associate of Arts degree. The associate degree is designed to prepare students for work, good citizenship, and a more enriching life. It is also designed to prepare students for further study. The AA and AS degrees both require 60 semester credits, including 6 credits of English. The AA degree requires 9 credits in science (math, computing science, statistics, laboratory science), 36 credits in arts (social science, humanities, English, creative and performing arts), and nine additional elective credits. The AS degree requires 6 credits in mathematics, 36 credits in science, 6 credits in arts other than English, and 6 elective credits. (LD)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 454 908

The Advisor

JUNE 2000

BRITISH COLUMBIA COUNCIL ON ADMISSIONS & TRANSFER

Bringing Significant New Information to the Attention of the B.C. Post-Secondary System

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

J. Karlinski

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

TC010496

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The Advisor

JUNE 2000

BRITISH COLUMBIA COUNCIL ON ADMISSIONS & TRANSFER

Bringing Significant New Information to the Attention of the B.C. Post-Secondary System

New Associate Degree Requirements

The Associate Degree in British Columbia

In 1988, the Provincial Access Committee formally proposed the development of an associate degree for students completing a specific two-year program of university-equivalent studies at community colleges to recognize the large number of students leaving college without any credential, even though they successfully completed 60 or more semester credits.

In 1991, following extensive consultation with the post-secondary system, the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT) recommended the establishment of an Associate of Arts degree and an Associate of Science degree, each with a set of provincial curricular requirements. The Minister of Advanced Education, Training & Technology subsequently approved the recommendation.

Welcome to

The Advisor:

This is the first issue of BCCAT's latest publication, intended to draw attention to new information on admissions and transfer in British Columbia.

In the five years 1993-98, approximately 1350 students earned an associate degree, the vast majority being Associate of Arts degrees.[1] In 1998, BCCAT began reviewing the associate degrees to determine if the requirements were still appropriate. An Associate Degree Review Task Force, chaired by Dr. Peter Jones, and with representation from: universities, university colleges, and colleges, spent 18 months in consultation with the post-secondary system prior to finalizing its recommendations to Council.

Review of the Curricular Requirements

When the associate degree was first recommended in 1991, a Provincial Task Force stated that the "curriculum requirements should reflect those characteristics that help define what constitutes an educated person in today's society." A guiding principle for its development became "breadth of course offerings, balanced with a sufficient depth in specific disciplines to provide a solid foundation for further study." Three criteria were also stipulated:

Standards: to develop an academically sound and publicly credible credential which would be an achievement goal for students and a benchmark of academic success in the eyes of the general public and potential employers.

Simplicity: to establish a common set of requirements which could be readily understood by students, advisers and faculty.

Transfer: to establish requirements that would not disadvantage students who chose to transfer to another college or to a baccalaureate degree program.

The Associate Degree Review Task Force concluded that the original guiding principles and criteria were still appropriate, but that the requirements should be more flexible. It also recommended that the skills and abilities students should develop or improve upon by completing an associate degree be made explicit. Some clarifying notes were also added and the requirements reorganized.

In summary, the most significant changes include:

a) adding an introduction that clarifies the intent of the degree;
b) requiring an overall average grade of 'C' (cumulative GPA of 2.0 or its equivalent) for all courses rather than a minimum grade of 'C' in each course;
c) allowing Statistics courses in various disciplines to satisfy part of the Science requirement for the Associate of Arts degree;
d) changing the Math requirement for the Associate of Science degree from 6 credits of Calculus to 6 credits of Math of which only 3 credits must be in Calculus; and
e) defining a laboratory course.

The proposed revisions were unanimously endorsed by BCCAT and recommended to the Minister of Advanced Education, Training and Technology who has now approved them. The new curricular requirements follow:

1 *Survey of Registrars about the Associate Degree: Report on Findings*, October, 1998. (http://www.bccat.bc.ca/pubs/karlinski.pdf)

TC010496

Requirements for the Associate of Arts Degree & Associate of Science Degree

(revisions approved May 30, 2000)

INTRODUCTION

The associate degree is designed to provide an educational experience that prepares students for work, citizenship and an enriched life as an educated person, and to lay a solid foundation for further study.

The associate degree curriculum comprises two years of university level study in a variety of academic areas. Students are required to complete a broad range of course offerings balanced with in-depth study in specific disciplines. Since many students will continue their studies, the requirements are sufficiently flexible to enable students to plan their educational program carefully and to complete the required prerequisites for upper level course work in their intended major. Students will be exposed to concepts, theories and modes of inquiry in the humanities, the social sciences and the sciences to develop:

- an interest in and curiosity about the world around them
- an understanding of the global context in which they live and work
- an appreciation of intellectual thought and human creativity
- an openness to a variety of viewpoints
- a capacity for and interest in self directed life-long learning
- acceptance of the social responsibilities that come with the benefits of advanced learning.

In addition, the program of study should develop and improve those skills and abilities essential for academic success at an advanced intellectual level. These may be taught in some courses, embedded in the curriculum of others, or achieved through class participation and the learning process. They include but are not limited to:

- advanced reading comprehension
- effective written and oral communications
- mathematical and scientific reasoning
- computer and technological literacy
- research and evaluative skills
- analysis, synthesis, and integration of knowledge
- critical thinking and problem solving
- application of theoretical understanding to practice
- working collaboratively.

ASSOCIATE OF ARTS DEGREE

General Requirements

60 semester credits of first and second year courses. These must include a minimum of 18 credits in Arts at the second-year level taken in two or more subject areas.

Specific Requirements

1. 6 credits in first-year English; *and*
2. 9 credits in Science which shall include at least:
   a) 3 credits in Mathematics, or Computing Science or Statistics (Statistics courses taught in subject areas such as Business, Commerce, Economics, Psychology, etc. may also be used to meet this requirement);
   b) 3 credits in a laboratory science, *and*
3. 36 credits in Arts which shall include:
   a) 6 credits in the Social Sciences;
   b) 6 credits in Humanities (including the Creative and Performing Arts) other than English;
   c) 24 additional credits in Arts, *and*
4. 9 credits in Arts, Science, or other areas.

ASSOCIATE OF SCIENCE DEGREE

General Requirements

60 semester credits of first and second year courses. These must include a minimum of 18 credits in Science at the second-year level taken in two or more subject areas.

Specific Requirements

1. 6 credits in first-year English; *and*
2. 6 credits in Mathematics which shall include at least 3 credits in Calculus; *and*
3. 36 credits in Science, which shall include at least 3 credits in a laboratory science; *and*
4. 6 credits in Arts other than English (excluding Mathematics and Laboratory-based Science courses); *and*
5. 6 credits in Arts, Science, or other areas.

REQUIREMENTS FOR BOTH DEGREES

1. All general and specific requirements must be met but an institution may set higher standards or additional requirements over and above these general and specific requirements.
2. No course will be used to meet more than one of the specific requirements.
3. An average overall grade of "C" (cumulative GPA of 2.0 or its equivalent) calculated on all courses counting towards the associate degree must be achieved.
4. The number of credits awarded for any particular course will be determined by the institution granting the associate degree. Although the number of credits awarded for any particular course may vary from institution to institution, it is expected that a student will have completed the equivalent of approximately twenty 3-credit courses to fulfill the degree requirements.

BCCAT Associate Degree Review Task Force

- Dr. Peter Jones (Chair), Former President, University College of the Fraser Valley
- Dr. Bob Brown, Co-Chair, BC Council on Admissions & Transfer
- Dr. Brian Carr, Dean of Science, Kwantlen University College
- Dr. Paul G. Harrison, Senate Admissions Committee, Department of Botany, University of British Columbia
- Dr. David J. Leeming, Professor of Mathematics & Statistics, University of Victoria
- Ms. Carol McCandless, Dean, Science & Technology, Capilano College
- Dr. Adrienne Peacock, Instructor, Faculty of Science & Technology, Douglas College
- Dr. Deborah Poff, Vice-President Academic, University of Northern British Columbia
- Dr. Don Tunstall, Former Dean of Arts, University College of the Fraser Valley
- Dr. Graeme Wynn, Professor, Department of Geography, University of British Columbia
- Dr. Frank Gelin, Executive Director & Co-Chair, BC Council on Admissions & Transfer
- Ms. Jean Karlinski, Administrative Assistant, BC Council on Admissions & Transfer

DEFINITIONS

1. A course is defined by the subject for which it is granted transfer credit at SFU or UBC or UNBC or UVic.
   a) an Arts course is defined to be any course in a subject area for which there is a Baccalaureate of Arts degree at SFU or UBC or UNBC or UVic.
   b) a Science course is defined to be any course in a subject area for which there is a Baccalaureate of Science degree or Baccalaureate of Applied Science degree at SFU or UBC or UNBC or UVic.

   The requirements specified above are intended to provide breadth of exposure to a variety of disciplines in both Arts and Sciences. In some instances there may be some ambiguity as to whether a course is in the Humanities or Social Sciences and is an Arts course or a Science course. While those determinations are left to the discretion of the institution granting the associate degree, it is expected that such courses as Human Geography and most Psychology courses would be designated as Arts courses, whereas courses in Physical Geography and Mathematics would be designated as Science courses.
   c) a course in an "other" area is defined to be any course in a subject area for which there is a Baccalaureate degree other than in Arts, Science, or Applied Science at SFU or UBC or UNBC or UVic.
2. A first-year course is defined as a course that has assigned or unassigned transfer credit at the 100-level at SFU or UBC or UNBC or UVic.
3. A second-year course is defined as a course that has assigned or unassigned transfer credit at the 200-level or higher level at SFU or UBC or UNBC or UVic.
4. A laboratory science is one in which a substantial component of student instruction involves the study of natural phenomena, either in the laboratory or in the field. Each institution granting the associate degree will determine which of its courses satisfy this requirement.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The Associate Degree as a Transfer Credential

Since the late 1960s, transfer credit for Arts and Science courses has been granted primarily on the basis of an assessment of course-to-course equivalency. During recent years BCCAT has engaged in a thorough review and assessment of the course-to-course transfer system to determine its continuing viability. This review involved an examination of transfer systems in other jurisdictions, the completion of a number of research studies measuring the effectiveness of our current system,[2] and extensive consultation with all B.C. public post-secondary institutions.

The Council concluded that although the current system is working reasonably well, it could and should be enhanced. This conclusion was driven by a recognition that during the past decade credit transfer arrangements have become progressively more difficult to establish and maintain as a direct result of the rapid expansion in the number of degree-granting institutions. This expansion includes three new universities and five university colleges, many of which are developing their own baccalaureate degree programs in traditional arts and science disciplines.

The Council decided that with the voluntary cooperation of both sending and receiving institutions it would undertake a number of initiatives to improve transfer. These include encouraging institutions to increase the flexibility of first and second year prerequisites and program requirements for transfer students entering receiving institutions, developing clearly defined sets of course requirements for particular programs to facilitate student planning, and providing improved transfer arrangements for associate degrees and/or other equivalent credentials.

Consequently, the Task Force was directed by Council not only to review the curricular requirements and standards for the associate degree but also to investigate the potential use of the associate degree as a vehicle for transfer to degree granting institutions.[3]

Currently, students with an associate degree are granted priority admission at Simon Fraser University and at the University of Northern British Columbia. UNBC, the B.C. Open University, and Malaspina University-College each guarantee students 60 transfer credits for all the courses in their associate degree, including courses for which no course-by-course transfer credit has been established at that institution. Students must still fulfill any outstanding requirements for their baccalaureate degree. It is this kind of flexibility BCCAT would like to achieve with all baccalaureate degree-granting institutions. Under these arrangements institutions still maintain appropriate control over the academic requirements for all degrees, majors and concentrations. Under ideal conditions potential transfer students will plan their selection of courses for the associate degree by including the requirements for the major they intend to pursue. Students who fail to plan accordingly, or who change their expectations regarding majors or degrees, may be required to complete additional courses upon transfer.

The Council will continue its work with baccalaureate degree-granting institutions, encouraging them to develop policies and practices to facilitate admissions and transfer opportunities for students with an associate degree.

BRITISH COLUMBIA COUNCIL ON ADMISSIONS & TRANSFER

SUPPORTING B.C.'S EDUCATION SYSTEM

- ***Address:***
  709 - 555 Seymour Street
  Vancouver, BC V6B 3H6
- ***Electronic Mail:***
  admin@bccat.bc.ca
- ***BCCAT Online (website):***
  www.bccat.bc.ca
- ***Telephone:***
  (604) 412-7700
- ***Fax:***
  (604) 683-0576
- ***Staff:***
  - Executive Director:
    Frank Gelin – fgelin@bccat.bc.ca
  - Associate Director:
    Finola Finlay – ffinlay@bccat.bc.ca
  - Executive Secretary:
    Barbara Clague – bclague@bccat.bc.ca
  - Administrative Assistant:
    Jean Karlinski – jkarlins@bccat.bc.ca
  - Transfer Guide Co-ordinator:
    Raymond Bendall – rbendall@islandnet.com

2 The various research reports, newsletters, and related publications can be accessed through the publications menu of the BCCAT web site at www.bccat.bc.ca/pubs/pubsfs.htm. Of particular interest are two papers: *Transfer: What's the Problem?*, Special Report, April 1999; and *Transfer: Some Solutions*, Special Report, April 2000.

3 *The Associate Degree as a Transfer Credential: A Discussion Paper*, May 1999. (http://www.bccat.bc.ca/pubs/assoc1.pdf)

©2000, British Columbia Council on Admissions & Transfer. Copying and further distribution is encouraged. Please credit source.
This report is also available in portable document format (PDF) from BCCAT Online, at www.bccat.bc.ca

PRINTED IN CANADA

BEST COPY AVAILABLE